



Reference Number 128/2021

Postdoctoral Researcher (m/f/d) “Land-use drivers of global biodiversity change”

Founded in 1409, Leipzig University is one of Germany’s largest universities and a leader in research and medical training. With around 30,000 students and more than 5000 members of staff across 14 faculties, it is at the heart of the vibrant and outward-looking city of Leipzig. Leipzig University offers an innovative and international working environment as well as an exciting range of career opportunities in research, teaching, knowledge and technology transfer, infrastructure and administration.

The German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig seeks to fill the above position from 1 October 2021 or at the earliest opportunity.

Background

The emergence of large-scale biodiversity databases (both structured, such as BioTIME and PREDICTS and unstructured, such as GBIF) has tremendously advanced understanding of global patterns of biodiversity change. The parallel emergence of time-series on potential drivers of these changes, such as land-use and land-cover change or ecosystem dynamics, offers equally exciting opportunities for better understanding the causes of biodiversity change. Many of these databases continue to grow rapidly, making it possible to keep updating and enhancing earlier analyses as new data become available. To model and analyse biodiversity effects of recent land-use dynamics using cutting-edge methodologies in a highly interdisciplinary and collaborative environment, we offer this position. The project is co-supervised by Dr Carsten Meyer (head of iDiv’s [Macroecology & Society](#) group) and Professor Jonathan Chase (head of iDiv’s [Biodiversity Synthesis](#) group), and will also involve collaborations with other members of iDiv (e.g., members from the Helmholtz-Centre for Environmental Research’s [Community Ecology](#) department, members of the Remote Sensing Centre for Earth System Research ([RSC4Earth](#)) as part of a ‘strategic project’ of our next funding phase.

The German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv) Halle-Jena-Leipzig is a National Research Centre funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG). Located in the city of Leipzig, it is a Central Institution of Leipzig University. More information about iDiv: www.idiv.de.

About the position

- Fixed term of 2 years, with possible prolongation for a 3rd year (subject to further formal approval of iDiv funding)
- 100 % of a full-time position
- Planned remuneration: salary group 13 TV-L

Duties

- Research on the influence of land-use change on biodiversity over large scales
- Dissemination of project results via journal publications and conference talks
- Contributing to the further development of open-science, collaborative IT solutions as part of longer-lasting tools for continuous global land-use and biodiversity-change analysis
- Contributing to the management of the collaborative project (co-organisation of project meetings, etc.)
- Regularly participating in group-based activities (meetings, workshops) and other activities as a member of the iDiv community (i.e. attending seminars, events)

Requirements

- PhD in a project-related field and interest in developing a career in science
- Prior experience in analysing large databases of biodiversity occurrence or abundance; an interest in traversing both (semi-)structured (e.g. BBS, BioTime, PREDICTS, eBird) and unstructured data (e.g. GBIF, iNat)
- Expertise in statistical modelling in the context of biodiversity-change data; ideally, experience in project-relevant techniques such as spatiotemporal modelling, predictive modelling, hierarchical Bayesian modelling, and/or Bayesian updating

- Good command of an open-source programming language (e.g. R, Julia, Python), and experience in/willingness to adopt version control (Git) and FAIR/reproducible data and code
- Prior experience in working with gridded environmental information (e.g. land-cover, land-use, climate) will be an advantage, but this is not a prerequisite
- Track record of publishing in international journals (or promising PhD chapters yet to be published)
- Excellent English communication skills (spoken and written)
- Proactive/independent, results-oriented with attention to detail, and with excellent team skills

What we offer

- A highly dynamic, collaborative and interdisciplinary working environment; note that postdoctoral salaries are generous relative to the cost of living in Leipzig, and benefits like health insurance, parental leave, and pension plans are standard
- Career-building support (e.g. in proposal writing, teaching opportunities, networking at iDiv and beyond), including regular interaction with a network of biodiversity and land-use change experts and voluntary participation in our iDiv postdoc career support programme
- Access to extensive infrastructure of biodiversity and driver datasets linked to powerful computational resources and associated expertise
- The working language at iDiv is English
- iDiv is a highly international centre with employees from over 30 countries and various forms of support for employees from outside of Germany (Welcome Centre, German classes, etc.)
- Leipzig is an attractive city with rich culture and beautiful surroundings, and international visitors usually find it easy to settle in.

Please send your application, quoting **reference number 128/2021** via our application portal under <https://apply.idiv.de> by 28 July 2021. While we prefer applications via this portal, hard-copy applications may also be sent to: German Centre for Integrative Biodiversity Research (iDiv), HR Department, Puschstr. 4, 04103 Leipzig. We kindly request that you submit copies only, as we are unable to return application documents. Interview expenses will not be reimbursed.

Leipzig University aims to increase the proportion of women in positions of responsibility and therefore expressly invites qualified women to apply. Severely disabled persons – or persons deemed legally equal to them under Book IX of the German Social Code – are encouraged to apply and will be given preference in the case of equal suitability.

Applications should include:

- Cover letter describing motivation, research interests and relevant experience
- A two-page overview of a research agenda that you could co-develop with collaborators to carry out during your postdoc; components of your project should relate changes facets of biodiversity, such as species distributions, populations, or (meta)community structures, to facets of land-use or ecosystem changes
- A detailed account of relevant technical skills/prior experience
- Digital copy of PhD certificate (or expected date of graduation – before start of position – with explanation on current status of PhD)
- Access to one of your recent statistics/modelling projects relevant for this position (e.g. paper, GitHub repository)
- PDF of what you consider your best/most relevant first-authored journal publication (final-year PhD researchers may alternatively send copies of two first-authored manuscripts that are ‘in the pipeline’ and indicate the target journals)
- Contact details of two scientific references.

Queries concerning the application process should be directed to the iDiv HR Department (hr@idiv.de). For research project questions, contact Dr Carsten Meyer (carsten.meyer@idiv.de).

iDiv is committed to establishing and maintaining a diverse and inclusive community that collectively supports and implements our mission to do great science. We welcome, recruit, develop and advance talented staff from diverse genders and backgrounds.

Privacy information

If you choose to apply and send us your documents, you do so voluntarily. Any personal data contained within your application documents, or obtained during an interview, will be processed by Leipzig University – as the advertiser of the position – exclusively for the purposes of the selection process for the position advertised. It will not be passed on to third parties without your consent in the individual case. The legal basis for such data processing is Sect. 11(1) of the Saxon Data Protection Implementation Act (SächsDSDG) in conjunction with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The controller for the application process within the meaning of the GDPR is the addressee of the application, specified in the advertisement. Your personal data will be stored for six months after the end of the recruitment process and then erased or destroyed in accordance with data protection regulations. You may refuse or withdraw your consent with effect for the future without giving reasons. In these cases, Leipzig University will not or no longer be able to process and consider your application. Under the GDPR, subject to the relevant statutory requirements you have the following rights vis-à-vis the addressee of the application with regard to your personal data: right of access (Art. 15 GDPR); right to rectification of inaccurate personal data (Art. 16 GDPR); right to erasure (Art. 17 GDPR); right to restriction of processing (Art. 18 GDPR); and right to object to processing (Art. 21 GDPR). If you have any questions, please contact the Data Protection Officer at Leipzig University (office: Augustusplatz 10, 04109 Leipzig). You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the Saxon Commissioner for Data Protection.